

REMARKS

In the non-final Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 1-23 under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75 for minor informalities; rejected claims 1-15 and 18-23 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as unpatentable over claims 1-9, 15-21, and 24-29 of U.S. Patent No. 5,909,440; and rejected claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kuwahara et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,947,388) in view of Nagami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,835,710). The Examiner identified claims 24-33 as allowed. The Examiner objected to claims 16 and 17 as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 11-33 to improve form and cancel claim 34 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants also submit herewith a terminal disclaimer. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's identification of allowable subject matter, but respectfully traverse the Examiner's objection to the claims under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75. Claims 1-33 remain pending.

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 1-23 because the term "trie" is allegedly misspelled. Applicants submit that the term "trie" is a term known in the art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claims 1-23 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-15 and 18-23 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as unpatentable over claims 1-9, 15-21, and 24-29 of U.S. Patent No. 5,909,440. Applicants submit herewith a Terminal Disclaimer to obviate the obviousness-type double patenting rejection over Patent No. 5,909,440.

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Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-15 and 18-23 and their timely allowance.

In paragraph 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Kuwahara et al. in view of Nagami et al. The cancellation of claim 34 renders the rejection of the claim moot. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claim 34 in this or another application.

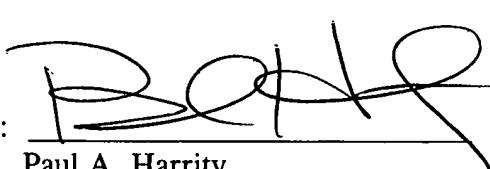
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration of the application and the timely allowance of pending claims 1-33.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 35 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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